LOVE OR MONEY;

OR,

A PERILOUS SECRET.

BY CHARLES READE,

Author of "Put Yourself in His Place," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KNOT CUT—ANOTHER TIED.

The farm-house the Gilberts occupied had been a family mansion of great antiquity with a moat around it. It was held during the civil war by a stout royalist, who armed and garrisoned it after a fashion with his own servants. This had a different effect to what he intended. It drew the attention of one of Cromwell's generals, and he dispatched a party with cannon and petards to reduce the place, whilst he marched on to join Cromwell in enterprises of more importance. The detachment of Roundheads summoned the place. The royalist, to show his respect for their authority, made his kitchen wench squeak a defiance from an upper window, from which she bolted with great rapidity as soon as she had thus represented the valor of the establishment, and when next seen it was in the cellar, wedged in between two barrels of beer. The men went at it hammer and tongs, and in twenty-four hours a good many cannon-balls traversed the building, a great many stuck in the walls like plums in a Christmas pudding, the doors were blown in with petards, and the principal defenders, with a few wounded Roundheads, were carried off to Cromwell himself; whilst the house itself was fired, and blazed away merrily.

Cromwell threatened the royalist gentleman with death for defending an untenable place.

"I didn't know it was untenable," said the gentleman. "How could I till I had tried?"

"You had the fate of fortified places to instruct you," said Cromwell, and he promised faithfully to hang him on his own ruins.

The gentleman turned pale and his lips quivered, but he said, "Well, Mr. Cromwell, I've fought for my royal master according to my lights, and I can die for him."

"You shall, sir," said Mr. Cromwell.

About next morning Mr. Cromwell, who had often a cool fit after a hot one, and was a very big man, take him altogether, gave a different order. "The fool thought he was doing his duty; turn him loose."

The fool in question was so proud of his battered house that he left it standing there, bullets and all, and built him a house elsewhere.

King Charles the Second had not landed a month before he made him a baronet, and one tenant after another occupied a portion of the old mansion. Two state-rooms were roofed and furnished with the relics of the entire mansion, and these two rooms the present baronet's surveyor occupied at rare intervals when he was inspecting the large properties connected with the baronet's estate.

Mary Bartley now occupied these two rooms, connected by folding-doors, and she sat pensive in the oriel-window of her bedroom. Young ladies cling to their bedrooms, especially when they are pretty and airy. Suddenly she heard a scurry and patter of a horse's hoof, reined up at the side of the house. She darted from the window and stood panting in the middle of the room. The next minute Mrs. Easton entered the sitting-room all in a flutter, and beckoned her. Mary flew to her.

"He is here."

"I thought he would be."

"Will you meet him down-stairs?"

"No, here."

Mrs. Easton acquiesced, rapidly closed the folding-doors, and went out, saying, "Try and calm yourself, Miss Mary."

Miss Mary tried to obey her, but Walter rushed in impetuously, pale, worn, agitated, yet enraptured at the first sight of her, and Mary threw herself round his neck in a moment, and he clasped her fluttering bosom to his beating heart, and this was the natural result of the restraint they had put upon a passionate affection; for what says the dramatist Destouches, improving upon Horace, so that in England his immortal line is given to Moliere: "*Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop.*"

The next thing was, they held each other at arm's-length, and mourned over each other.

"Oh, my poor Mary, how ill you look!"

"Oh, my poor Walter, how pale and worn!"

"It's all my fault," said Mary.

"No; it's all mine," said Walter.

And so they blamed themselves, and grieved over each other, and vowed that come what might they would never part again. But, lo and behold! Walter went on from that to say:

"And that we may never part again let us marry at once, and put our happiness out of the reach of accidents."

"What!" said Mary. "Defy your father upon his dying bed!"

"Oh no," said Walter, "that I could not do. I mean marry secretly, and announce it after his decease, if I am to lose him."

"And why not wait till after his decease?" said Mary.

"Because, then, the laws of society would compel us to wait six months, and in that six months some infernal obstacle or other would be sure to occur, and another would be sure to follow. I am a great deal older than you, and I see that whoever procrastinates happiness, risks it; and whoever shilly-shallies with it deserves to lose it, and generally does."

Where young ladies are concerned, logic does not carry all before it, and so Mary opposed all manner of feminine sentiments, and ended by saying she could not do such a thing.

Then Walter began to be mortified and angry; then she cunningly shifted the responsibility, and said she would consult Mrs. Easton.

"Then consult her in my presence," said Walter.

Mary had not bargained for that; she had intended to secure Mrs. Easton on her side, and then take her opinion. However, as Walter's proposal was fair, she called Mrs. Easton, and they put the case to her, and asked her to give her candid opinion.

Mrs. Easton, however, took alarm at the gravity of the proposal, and told them both she knew things that were unknown to both of them, and it was not so easy for her to advise.

"Well, but," said Walter, "if you know more than we do, you are the very person that can advise. All I know is that if we are not married now, I shall have to wait six months at least, and if I stay here Mr. Bartley and I shall quarrel, and he will refuse me Mary; and if I go abroad again I shall get knocked on the head, or else Mary will pine away again, and Bartley will send her to Madeira, and we shall lose our happiness, as all shilly-shallying fools do."

Mrs. Easton made no reply to this, though she listened attentively to it. She walked to the window and thought quietly to herself; then she came back again and sat down, and after a pause she said, very gravely, "Knowing all I know, and seeing all I see, I advise you two to marry at once by special license, and keep it secret from every one who knows you—but myself—till a proper time comes to reveal it; and it's borne in upon me that that time will come before long, even if Colonel Clifford should not die this bout, which everybody says he will."

"Oh, nurse," said Mary faintly, "I little thought that you'd be against me."

"Against you, Miss Mary!" said Mrs. Easton, with much feeling. "I admire Mr. Walter very much, as any woman must with eyes in her head, and I love him for loving of you so truly, and like a man, for it does not become a man to shilly-shally, but I never saw him till he *was* a man, but you are the child I nursed, and prayed over, and trembled for in sickness, and rejoiced over in health, and left a good master because I saw he did not love you so well as I did."

These words went to Mary's heart, and she flew to her nurse, and hung weeping round her neck. Her tears made the manly but tender-hearted Walter give a sort of gulp. Mary heard it, and put her white hand out to him. He threw himself upon his knees, and kissed it devotedly, and the coy girl was won.

From this hour Walter gave her no breathing-time; he easily talked over old Baker, and got him to excuse his short absence; he turned his hunters into roadsters, and rode them very hard; he got the special license; he squared a clergyman at the head of the lake, who was an old friend of his and fond of fees, and in three days after her consent, Mary and Mrs. Easton drove a four-wheeled carriage Walter had lent them to the little hotel at the lakes.

Walter had galloped over at eleven o'clock, and they all three took a little walk together. Walter Clifford and Mary Bartley returned from that walk *man and wife*.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

Walter Clifford and Mary sat at a late breakfast in a little inn that looked upon a lake, which appeared to them more lovely than the lake of Thun or of Lucerne. He beamed steadily at her with triumphant rapture; she stole looks at him of wonder, admiration, and the deepest love.

As they had nothing now to argue about, they only spoke a few words at a time, but these were all musical with love.

To them, as we dramatists say, entered Mrs. Easton, with signs of hurry.

"Miss Mary—" said she.

"Mrs. Mary," suggested Walter, meekly.

Mrs. Mary blew him a kiss.

"Ay, ay," said Mrs. Easton, smiling. "Of course you will both hate me, but I have come to take you home, Mistress Mary."

"Home!" said Mary; "why, this feels like home."

"No doubt," said Mrs. Easton, "but, for all that, in half an hour we must start."

The married couple remonstrated with one accord, but Mrs. Easton was firm. "I dreamed," says she, "that we were all found out—and that's a warning. Mr. Walter, you know that you'll be missed at Clifford Hall, and didn't ought to leave your father another day. And you, Miss Mary, do but think what a weight I have taken upon my shoulders, and don't put off coming home, for I am a'most shaking with anxiety, and for sure and certain my dream it was a warning, and there's something in the wind."

They were both so indebted to this good woman that they looked at each other piteously, but agreed. Walter rang the bell, and ordered the four-wheeler and his own nag.

"Mary, one little walk in the sweet garden."

"Yes, dear," said Mary, and in another moment they were walking in the garden, intertwined like the ivy and the oak, and purring over their present delights and glowing prospects.

In the mean time Mrs. Easton packed up their things: Walter's were enrolled in a light rug with straps, which went upon his saddle. They left the little inn, Mary driving. When they had gone about two miles they came to cross-roods.

"Please pull up," said Mrs. Easton; then turning to Walter, who was riding ridiculously close to Mary's whip hand, "Isn't that the way to Clifford Hall?"

"It's one way," said he; "but I don't mean to go that way. How can I? It's only three miles more round by your house."

"Nurse," said Mary, appealingly.

"Ay, ay, poor things," said Mrs. Easton. "Well, well, don't loiter, anyway. I shall not be my own woman again till we're safe at the farm."

So they drove briskly on, and in about an hour more they got to a long hill, whence they could see the Gilberts' farm.

"There, nurse," said Mary, pouting a little, "now I hope you're content, for we have got safe home, and he and I shall not have a happy day together again."

"Oh yes, you will, and many happy years," said Mrs. Easton. "Well, yes, I don't feel so fidgety now."

"Oh!" cried Mary, all of a sudden. "Why, there's our gray mare coming down the hill with the dog-cart! Who's that driving her? It's not papa. I declare it's Mr. Hope, come home safe and sound. Dear Mr. Hope! Oh, now my happiness is perfect!"

"Mr. Hope!" screamed Mrs. Easton. "Drive faster, for Heaven's sake! Turn your horse, sir and gallop away from us as hard as you can!"

"Well, but, Mrs. Easton——" objected Walter.

Mrs. Easton stood up in the carriage. "Man alive!" she screamed, "you know nothing, and I know a deal; begone, or you are no friend of mine; you'll make me curse the hour that I interfered."

"Go, darling," said Mary, kindly, and so decidedly that he turned his horse directly, gave her one look of love and disappointment, and galloped away.

Mary looked pale and angry, and drove on in sullen silence.

Mrs. Easton was too agitated to mind her angry looks. She kept wiping the perspiration from her brow with her handkerchief, and speaking in broken sentences: "If we could only get there first—fool not to teach my sister her lesson before we went, she's such a simpleton!—can't you drive faster?"

"Why, nurse," said Mary, "don't be so afraid of Mr. Hope. It's not him I'm afraid of; it's papa."

"You don't know what you're talking about, child. Mr. Bartley is easily blinded; I won't tell you why. It isn't so with Mr. Hope. Oh, if I could only get in to have one word with my simple sister before he turns her inside out!"

This question was soon decided. Hope drove up to the door whilst Mary and Mrs. Easton were still some distance off and hidden by a turn in the road. When they emerged again into sight of the farm they just caught sight of Hope's back, and Mrs. Gilbert curtesying to him and ushering him into the house.

"Drive into the stable-yard," said Mrs. Easton, faintly. "He mustn't see your traveling basket, anyway."

She told the servant to put the horse into the stable immediately, and the basket into the brew-house. Then she hurried Mary up the back stairs to her room, and went with a beating heart to find Mr. Hope and her sister.

Mrs. Gilbert, though a simple and unguarded woman, could read faces like the rest, and she saw at once that her sister was very much put by this visit of Mr. Hope, and wanted to know what had passed between her and him. This set the poor woman all in a flutter for fear she should have said something injudicious, and thereupon she prepared to find out, if possible, what she ought to have said.

"What! Mr. Hope!" said Mrs. Easton. "Well, Mary will be glad. And have you been long home, sir?"

"Came last night," said Hope. "She hasn't been well, I hear. What is the matter?" And he looked very anxious.

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Easton, very guardedly, "she certainly gave me a fright when she came here. She looked quite pale; but whether it was that she wanted a change—but whatever it was, it couldn't be very serious. You shall judge for yourself. Sister, go to Miss Mary's room, and tell her."

Mrs. Easton, in giving this instruction, frowned at her sister as much as to say, "Now don't speak, but go."

When she was gone, the next thing was to find out if the woman had made any foolish admission to Mr. Hope; so she waited for him.

She had not long to wait.

Hope said: "I hardly expected to see you; your sister said you were from home."

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Easton, "we were not so far far off, but we did come home a little sooner than we intended, and I am rare glad we did, for Miss Mary wouldn't have missed you for all the *views* in the county."

With that she made an excuse, and left him. She found her sister in Mary's room; they were comparing notes.

"Now," said she to Mrs. Gilbert, "you tell me every word you said to Mr. Hope about Miss Mary and me."

"Well, I said you were not at home, and that is every word; he didn't give me time to say any more for questioning of her health."

"That's lucky," said Mrs. Easton dryly. "Thank Heaven, there's no harm done; he shan't see the carriage."

"Dear me, nurse," said Mary, "all this time I'm longing to see him."

"Well, you shall see him, if you won't own to having been a night from home."

Mary promised, and went eagerly to Mr. Hope. It did not come natural to her to be afraid of him, and she was impatient for the day to come when she might tell the whole story. The reception he gave her was not of a nature to discourage this feeling; his pale face—for he had been very ill—flushed at sight of her, his eyes poured affection upon her, and he held out both hands to her. "This the pale girl they frightened me about!" said he. "Why, you're like the roses in July."

"That's partly with seeing of you, sir," said Mrs. Easton, quietly following, "but we do take some credit to ourseyles so; for Miss Mary *was* rather pale when she came here a week ago; but, la, young folks want a change now and then."

"Nurse," said Mary, "I really was not well, and you have done wonders for me, and I hope you won't think me ungrateful, but I *must* go home with Mr. Hope."

Hope's countenance flushed with delight, and Mrs. Easton saw in a moment that Mary's affection was co-operating with her prudence. "I thought that would be her first word, sir," said she. "Why, of course you will, miss. There, don't you take any trouble; we'll pack up your things and put them in the dog-cart; but you must eat a morsel, both of you, before you go. There's a beautiful piece of beef in the pot, not over-salted, and some mealy potatoes and suet dumplings. You sit down and have your chat, whilst Polly and I get everything ready for you."

Then Mary asked Mr. Hope so many questions with such eager affection that he had no time to ask her any, and then she volunteered the home news, especially of Colonel Clifford's condition, and then she blushed and asked him if he had said anything to her father about Walter Clifford.

"Not much" said Mr. Hope. "You are very young, Mary, and it's not for me to interfere, and I won't interfere. But if you want my opinion, why, I admire the young man extremely. I always liked him; he is a straightforward, upright, manly, good-hearted chap, and has lots of plain good sense—Heaven knows where he got it!"

This eulogy was interrupted by Mary putting a white hand and a perfect nose upon Hope's shoulder, and kissing the cloth thereon.

"What," said Hope, tenderly, and yet half sadly—for he knew that all middle-aged men must now be second—"have I found the way to your heart?"

"You always knew that, Mr. Hope," said Mary, softly; "especially since my escapade in that horrid brook."

Their affectionate chat was interrupted by a stout servant laying a snowy cloth, and after her sailed in Mrs. Gilbert, with a red face, and pride unconcealed and justifiable, carrying a grand dish of smoking hot boiled beef, set in a very flower bed, so to speak, of carrots, turnips, and suet dumplings; the servant followed with a brown basin, almost as big as a ewer, filled with mealy potatoes, whose jackets hung by a thread. Around this feast the whole party soon collected, and none of them sighed for Russian soups or French ragouts; for the fact is that under the title of boiled beef there exist two things, one of which, without any great impropriety, might be called junk; but this was the powdered beef of our ancestors, a huge piece just slightly salted in the house itself, so that the generous juice remained in it, but the piquant slices, with the mealy potatoes, made a delightful combination. The glasses were filled with home-brewed ale, sparkling and clear and golden as the finest Madeira. They all ate manfully, stimulated by the genial hostess. Even Mary outshone all her former efforts, and although she couldn't satisfy Mrs. Gilbert, she declared she had never eaten so much in all her life. This set good Mrs. Gilbert's cheeks all aglow with simple, honest satisfaction.

Hope drove Mary home in the dog-cart. He was a happy man, but she could hardly be called a happy woman. She was warm and cold by turns. She had got her friend back, and that was a comfort, but she was not treating him with confidence; indeed she was passively deceiving him, and that chilled her; but then it would not be for long, and that comforted her; and yet even when the day should come for the great doors of Clifford Hall to fly open to her, would not a sad, reproachful look from dear Mr. Hope somewhat embitter her cup of happiness? Deceit, and even reticence, did not come so natural to her as they do to many women; she was not weak, and she was frank, though very modest.

Mr. Bartley met them at the door, and owing to Hope's presence, was more demonstrative than usual. He seemed much pleased at Mary's return, and delighted at her appearance.

"Well," said he, "I am glad I sent you away for a week. We have all missed you, my dear, but the change has set you up again. I never saw you look better. Now you are well, we must try and keep you well."

We must leave the reader to imagine the mixed feelings with which Mrs. Walter Clifford laid her head upon the pillow that night, and we undertake to say that the female readers, at all events, will supply this blank in our narrative much better than we could, though we were to fill a chapter with that subject alone

[To be Continued.]

THE LITTLE LAND.

[Robert Louis Stevenson.]

When at home alone I sit
And am very tired of it,
I have just to shut my eyes
To go sailing through the skies.
To go sailing far away
To the pleasant Land of Play;
To the fairy land afar,
Where the little people are,
Where the clover tops are trees,
And the rain pools are the seas,
And the leaves like little ships,
Sail about on tiny trips;
And above the daisy tree
Through the grasses,
High o'er head the bumble-bee
Hums and passes.

In that forest to and fro
I can wander, I can go;
See the spider and the fly,
And the ants go marching by
Carrying parcels with their feet,
Down the green and grassy street.
I can in the sorrel sit
Where the lady bird alit,
I can climb the jointed grass;
And on high
See the greater swallows pass
In the sky.
And the round sun rolling by
Heeding no such things as I.

Through that forest I can pass
Till, as in a looking-glass,
Humming fly and daisy tree
And my tiny self I see,
Painted very clear and neat
On the rain-pool at my feet.
Should a leaflet come to hand
Drifting near to where I stand,
Straight I'll board that tiny boat,
Round that rain-pool sea to float.

Little thoughtful creatures sit
On the grassy coasts of it;
Little things with lovely eyes
See me sailing with surprise.
Some are clad in armor green—
(These have sure to battle been)—
Some are pied with every hue,
Black and crimson, gold and blue;
Some have wings and swift are gone,
But they all look kindly on.
When my eyes I once again
Open and see all things plain,
High, bare walls, a great bare floor;
Great big knobs on drawer and door;
Great big people perched on chairs,
Stitching tucks and mending tears,
Each a hill that I could climb,
And talking nonsense all the time—
O, dear me,
That I could be
A sailor on the rain-pool sea,
A climber in the clover tree,
And just come back, a sleepy head,
Late at night to go to bed.

In his "Recollections of a Veteran Man of Letters" Sir Henry Taylor, speaking of the year 1834, says: "Just then the enthusiasm for Lord Byron's impassioned but often rather empty moroseness and despair, though it may not have suffered a general collapse, had passed away from some of the more cultivated classes and found, perhaps, its surest retreat in the schoolboy's study and in the back shop. And thither also had retired the sympathy which, when it is accompanied by anything dazzling in personal attributes or circumstances, intensity of self-love can sometimes excite in the popular mind The more just admiration felt for his brilliancy and wit and his general poetic power remained in large measure; but even this, perhaps, drooped more or less from being entangled with the dead body of the other enthusiasm. * * * It is not easy for a passion to pass into a reasonably warm regard. Moore's genius, though of course with much diversity, was yet too much akin to Byron's for the one not to have lost by the opposition of the other; at the dawn of Byron's day 'it 'gan to pale its ineffectual fire,' and when that day declined its own lustre was so far bedimmed as to make extinction seem to some cold calculators little more than a question of time."

Sir Henry Taylor, in his recollections of a veteran man of letters, said of Carlyle, in 1843: "From time to time Carlyle threw his bluelights across the conversation. Strange and brilliant he was as ever, but more than ever adrift in his opinions, if opinions he could be said to have; for they darted about like the monsters of the solar microscope, perpetually devouring each other."

According to The Jewelers' Circular French clocks represent the highest perfection in the way of decorative clock cases, English clock-makers claim and deserve the reputation of producing the most accurate timekeepers, while to the American manufacturers belong the credit of making the best timekeepers at the least possible cost.

A FRIENDLY REVENGE.

[Henry Tyrrell in the Current.]

Yes, revenge was my motive. I acted in obedience to that noble instinct of retaliation which helps to distinguish our species from the lower animals. The offence of my friend Hornbeam was one of those smiling little social foil-thrusts, which must be resented courteously if they be resented at all.

So I gave him a pair of young kingfishers. I must explain here that Hornbeam is an amateur student of natural history, and that birds are his specialty. Every feathered creature, from a chick to a condor, he loves to infatuation.

Now, while the kingfisher species is common everywhere in this wild state, a domesticated king-fisher is truly a rara avis in terra. It had been by a mere chance that I had secured the pair which I presented to my friend, and he received them with an effusive delight which I am sure was not simulated.

As soon as the two aquatic beauties arrived at Hornbeam's country villa, he purchased for them a magnificent cage, the epitome of all modern ornithological conveniences.

Shy and sullen, though by no means silent, the birds quickly made it understood that their solace after all was but a prison, and that they were very unhappy in it. They began to droop and pine.

"Liberty!" the kind-hearted Hornbeam cried—"liberty for all, especially the fowls of the air."

There was a spare room under the roof of the villa. This was cleared of furniture, the floor was gravelled, and the room transformed into a model aviary. The kingfishers were turned loose in it; but, instead of rejoicing in their comparative freedom, they sulked more than ever.

"What can they want?" Hornbeam asked, with great solicitude, when I called to see how the pets were getting on. "I have done everything I can think of for their comfort, and yet it appears that something or other is lacking."

"Water, perhaps," I suggested.

"Water!" he echoed, disdainfully. "Why, you don't suppose after all my experience with birds I would neglect their water, do you? They have more than they can drink, twice a day."

"Enough to drink, doubtless," I replied, affecting a tone of friendly counsel; "but that is not enough. Remember that in their natural state of freedom, these creatures haunt the lakes and streams."

Hornbeam was silent for a moment.

"You are right," he finally said, in a troubled tone. Then, after an interval of deep abstraction, he suddenly brightened up, and cried: "I have it! my bath-room is directly under the chamber they occupy. I'll establish a communication."

The next day that part of the house was surrendered to workmen. The floor was torn up, and the ceiling of the bath-room cut through, so that the kingfishers might be free to descend and disport themselves on the slashy brink of the bathtub, which was ordered to be kept always full of fresh water for their accommodation.

Hornbeam watched with eagerness the result of his novel though somewhat costly device. But even before he had finished looking over the bills of the carpenters, masons, painters, plumbers and upholsterers, relative to the "job," it became evident that the work had been done in vain. The birds perched morosely in a corner, as though afraid they might possibly tumble down into the water and be drowned.

Suddenly it occurred to my friend that the pool in his bath-tub was of mirrow-like serenity, whereas the kingfishers, it was more than likely, had been accustomed to running water. No doubt a gushing, sparkling stream was what they longed for.

Hornbeam did not hesitate. He called back the mechanics. The whole of the plumbing would have to be altered, and a special contract would have to be made with the water works company. The financial outlay would be considerable; but the stream of running water would be a triumphant reality, and the poor birds would at last be happy.

Alas! they were not.

Their unhappy master—I should rather say slave—whose devotion to them increased in direct ratio with the trouble they cost him, began to despair. He poured into my sympathetic ear the whole history of his unsuccessful efforts to provide a pleasant home for the precious birds I had given him, and besought my advice.

"My dear Hornbeam," I responded, with Mephistophelian suavity, "your error seems to be in supposing that the kingfishers love water for its own sake."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that what they really care for is the fish that are in it. Put some fish in your running water, and I think you will find that your birds will be as content with their surroundings as the fish in their own natural element."

"I'll do it!" the enthusiastic Hornbeam cried. "I'll stock that bath-tub with live fish, and the kingfishers can amuse themselves diving for them."

Two weeks later Hornbeam found the expense of procuring the daily supply of live fish so enormous that he determined to catch them himself. Of course, an angler's outfit must be purchased. A boat, also, would be necessary, and a man to row it, for the seine-drawing would be no holiday sport.

Hornbeam was a far-sighted man. He was not one to stop at an expenditure which, once made, would in the long run result in an immense saving.

He bought a steam launch.

There were days when the fish were shy, and then the task of the provider was a very hard one indeed. On other days the haul would be so large that a place to store the superfluous fish became a necessity. An artificial pond, and a large reservoir to feed it, were accordingly constructed just back of the Hornbeam villa.

An army of Italian laborers are now at work digging a system of canals to extend over the entire grounds. All the trees have been cut down, and contracts are out for a series of hydraulic works on a vast scale, and representing a moderate fortune.

The two kingfishers are doing as well as could be expected.

Sometimes, lately, I have had a feeling akin to remorse for my act of friendly revenge, and I have begun to speculate as to whether or not the birds will die of overfeeding in time to save Hornbeam from ruin.

The Proportion of Children to Ruffles.

[Christian Union.]

Increase of style always means increase of labor. A servant's duties are infinitely harder than they were twenty years ago. Contrast the single item of laundry work in a modern family with the family washing of the preceding generation. Then there were ten children to one ruffle; now we have ten ruffles to each child. "Conveniences have multiplied," it is true, but the work has outstripped them.